

A JOYOUS FARMER'S BOY.

Poets have sung in words of joy
That rural life is fun;
I'd love to be a farmer's boy—
A right rich farmer's son.

I love the old plow handles much,
With their most shapely crook;
How they'd inspire my hands to clutch
The fish pole by the brook!

And when the plowing was begun
My steps would not be stayed,
How quick a furrow I could run
Directed to the shade!

And then when came the planting morn,
All in the sun intense,
How nimbly could I drop the corn
And climb up on the fence!

Haymaking time doth make more lithe
The muscles and the thighs;
How sweet to swing the glittering scythe—
Across a bough and snooze!

And when the garden should be made
"Twere rife with rural charms
To go forth with the trusty spade
And dig some angle worms.

And how delightful it would be,
With arms all strong and stout,
To drive the ax into the tree
So it would not come out.

And if the fences lacked repair,
Indeed 'twould stir the blood
To go and hunt an opening where
My neighbor's daughter stood!

—A. W. Bellaw, in Detroit Free Press.



CHAPTER IX.—CONTINUED.

"What is it, my child?" he asked, laying his hand on her hair. "A lover's quarrel?"

"Yes," she whispered. "The first we have ever had."

"Well, well, we all know that lovers never part after a first quarrel," he said, in a quiet matter-of-fact tone that calmed her nerves. "What was it all about, little one, if an old man may ask?"

"It arose out of a very simple speech of mine which seemed to annoy Michael," answered Olive, her cheeks flushing and paling as she recalled the afternoon's experience. "We were sitting under the trees in Kew Gardens, and I asked him if we could possibly be happier than we were then?"

"Michael took offense because you were too easily contented, and one word followed another?" said Uncle Wake.

"Yes," Olive considered for a moment, and then repeated all that she could remember of the conversation. Afterwards a silence fell upon them both, and the roll of wheels in the Strand sounded but faintly in their ears. It was Olive who broke the pause.

"If I could only believe that this was merely a difference of opinion, and not a difference of spirit, I should be easier," she said. "But Michael seems to think that my ideal life is an absurd dream. He cannot realize any kind of happiness that is not founded on self-interest alone. He cannot comprehend any joy outside himself. Oh, how horrible it seems to say these things about the man whom I love with all my heart! Help me, Uncle Wake, speak kind words and comfort me!"

This was an appeal which Samuel had not expected to hear for many a day. He had not known that Olive had been rapidly gaining powers of penetration.



MID NOT HEAR HIS APPROACH.

tration. He had not thought that the books he had given her would have done their work so soon. And how could he dare soothe her with false comfort, or give her the broken reed of a lie to lean upon? How could he throw dust in the eyes that saw Michael as he really was, and yet prayed to be blinded?

"Olive," he said, tenderly, "I am afraid it is the fate of nearly all good women to be somewhat disappointed in the men they love. A man's daily struggle with the world is almost sure to harden him. Every true woman has within her that capacity for self-sacrifice which makes it easy for her to comprehend the one great sacrifice. Like her Master, she longs to go about among the people, and do them good."

"But will he never feel as I do?" she asked, mournfully.

"Not altogether, perhaps. Olive, you must learn to love him without giving up the best part of yourself for his sake. You must not pluck out your own white wings because he cannot

soar. If you do this, you will neither content him nor yourself. You will always be haunted by the sense of loss, and he will know that you are not satisfied."

She turned her eyes upon him with a gaze of intense anxiety.

"How can two walk together unless their spirits are one?" she said, with a sigh.

"Bodily union and spiritual disunion—one sees it every day," Samuel Wake answered. "If you marry a man whose thoughts are not your thoughts, nor his ways your ways, you must prepare to tread a difficult path, my child. Your own heart must help you in the matter; love, and the instincts of a true wife, can make a woman wise and strong."

"And I love him, I do love him!" she said. "Perhaps he is ill and suffering at this moment, and I am not near him!"

If she had been near him she would have beheld him making a fresh toilet in high good humor. Edward Battersby had met him, and had invited him to dine at a fashionable restaurant that evening.

"Men are made of tougher materials than you fancy," Uncle Wake replied, with a reassuring smile. "He looked well enough when I saw him. Take my word for it, that headache was an excuse for ill-temper. Don't be fussy about him, my dear. He will find his way back to you when the fit is over."

Then he brought one of the books that were piled upon the table, and began to read a poem aloud. The verses were well chosen, and his voice was pleasant to her ears. So the afternoon glided into evening, and when Mrs. Wake came home, more pensive and shadowy than ever after her visit to Jessie, Olive was able to meet her with cheerfulness. It was hard to see Michael's vacant place at the supper table; but Uncle Wake encouraged her with smiles, and talked quite openly of the absent lover.

"If he does not come in on Monday or Tuesday, I shall go and look him up," he said. "Ah, Mrs. Wake, how unreasonable you used to be if I ever dared to have a headache! It is only women who are allowed to be invalids. A lover ought to have an iron constitution."

"You always had," his wife remarked, "but Michael is not made of iron, and he looks as if he had nerves. Perhaps he is a little irritable sometimes. I know he has a short manner, but what is manner when a man is hardworking and steady? When I looked at our poor Jessie to-day, I could not help thinking of Olive's good fortune."

For years, everybody had been talking to Olive about her good fortune. Who was she, that such a clever young man should have set his heart upon her? The girl had always been humble and grateful, and she was humble and grateful still; only a subtle change was stealing over the humility and gratitude. She did not think less of Michael, nor was she less lowly in mind, but she had begun to use certain faculties which had been undeveloped in her village home.

She had learned lately that there are certain aspirations which cannot be stifled, even at love's command, without self-degradation. Truly he who findeth his life in this world only, shall lose it; the worship of things that perish in the using destroys all spiritual life in the worshiper. Olive had found out this truth.

When she lay down to rest that night she fell into a peaceful sleep, and dreamed of the old downs and fields of her childhood. Michael was roaming with her through those calm meadows, rich with the purple and gold of summer. He was once more the younger and simpler Michael of the past; they were happy in the old-fashioned way of rustic lovers. Then Jane and Aaron joined them, and they followed the course of the rivulet through the grass, and laughed for very gladness of heart.

She awoke suddenly in the light of a London day, with that dream-laughter ringing in her ears. And then all the bitterness of yesterday came back like a flood, and she remembered that she and Michael had drifted apart.

But downstairs there was the everyday life awaiting her, full of its wholesome work and cheerfulness. And there was a note from Michael, addressed to herself, and written late on Sunday night.

"Dearest Olive" (it ran), "Do not wonder at my absence for a few days. I hope to bring you good news when I come. My head is better."

"Yours as ever, M. C."

CHAPTER X.

"HOW THE OLD, OLD TIES ARE LOOSENED." Olive lived cheerfully on that brief note all through the week. Michael had forgiven her, and the world was bright again.

He came to see her on Sunday afternoon, but the visit was short. Edward Battersby had claimed him for the evening. All his dreams were about to be realized, success was within his grasp, and Olive listened to his explanations with wonder and delight. There was no doubt as to the working of his new plan; it had already been tested with the most satisfactory results, and was to have a longer and fuller trial. Meanwhile Edward Battersby was overwhelmed him with tokens of good will. Everyone in the works was aware of his exaltation; he was to receive more substantial rewards later on, but even now he was recognized as a person of the highest importance.

"What does Aaron say to all this?" asked Olive, when Michael paused to take breath. "I wish he would come and see me."

Michael frowned impatiently.

"Why do you think of Aaron?" he said; "he was always a gloomy fool who could not help himself, and lately he has been insufferable."

"He is unhappy, Michael." Her face was troubled. "You see, he has long been wanting to make a home for Jane, and when they lowered his wages he lost heart. But now that your success is assured, dear, you will be kind to him?"

"Kind to him!" Michael repeated angrily. "I shall be heartily glad to see the last of him, and hear the last of his maudering talk about old times."

"But he was our early friend," she said sadly, "and there is poor Jane to be considered."

"I don't know why I should consider Jane," returned Michael loftily. "She certainly has no claim on me. But this is always the case, when a man succeeds in life, all his old acquaintances hang round his neck like millstones. He is not allowed to enjoy the fruits of his own toil alone."

"Dear Michael!" her hand softly touched his. "Ought one to enjoy the fruits of one's toil alone?"

"You are a most extraordinary girl, Olive," he said, in the indulgent tone she knew so well. "You never lose a chance of saying something sentimental—something taken from one of your favorite books! But never mind, I will not let anything mar our pleasure to-day. You are free to talk to your uncle, and tell him all our good news."

Her face brightened in an instant. "Dear Uncle Wake," she said, "he is always so glad to hear of anyone's prosperity."

"Well, he has had little enough of his own to be glad of," remarked Michael, with a contemptuous laugh. "What will he say when he has to part with you, Olive? Anyone can see that you are the light of this house; but I can't lend my illuminator to other people much longer. And I wish you would give up that wretched flower business, little woman."

"Don't ask me to give it up just yet," she said, in a sweet voice of entreaty. "Please don't. I will promise to be very good and obedient by and by."

"I suppose I must be contented with that promise," he answered, affably. "but I am glad you keep well out of sight at that flower shop. I don't want my wife's face to be known to the public."



SHE SCARCELY NOTICED HIM.

lie yet. Do you know, child, I intend that you shall create a sensation? You will be a noted beauty one of these days, if you take care of yourself and do as I tell you."

A richer bloom rose to the soft cheek, but the lips quivered as if with pain.

"I should hate notoriety," she said, proudly.

"Nonsense! you won't hate anything in your new life," he replied, kissing her. "It will be a life of charming dresses and jewels; what can a woman desire more?"

"Oh, I shall want much more than that," she answered, looking frankly up at him with clear eyes.

But he only laughed, and went his way.

More days went and came, and he did not come, but frequent notes made amends for his absence. Olive went about her daily business with the lightest of hearts and the brightest of faces. Uncle Wake rejoiced with her in her joy, and Aunt Wake talked of nothing but weddings and bridal array. Sometimes when Olive looked back to the Sunday afternoon in Kew Gardens, it seemed very dim and far distant. She could hardly recognize herself in the girl who had sat under the larches and had been so passionately miserable that day.

Ah, she would ask Michael to take her to the gardens again when he had time enough to spare. She must have been in a foolish mood when they were there last, or his headache, perhaps, had made him fractious. His letters were so affectionate and kind that her doubts were all beginning to disappear. He had been hardened, absorbed; every nerve had been strained in his long struggle, but now that the end was gained there would be peace. Yes, and leisure for thoughts of others and good deeds and gentle words.

The one cloud in her bright sky was Aaron. She had written to him once or twice but there was no reply, and he never fulfilled his promise of coming to see her again. Jane was beginning to despair, but Olive still wrote to her in a cheerful strain, begging her not to give up all hope. Surely something could be done for Aaron by and by; and if Michael still refused to come to the aid of his old friend Olive resolved to take the matter into her own

hands. In some way or other Aaron should be helped out of the slough of despond.

She was so busy with her own thoughts and hopes that although Seaward Aylstone came several times to the florist's shop she scarcely noticed him. As in a dream she heard his calm voice, ordering sprays of ivory and roses, and in a dream still she wove the flowers and leaves together. She did not know that his glance always turned to the corner where she sat with her pretty curly brown head bent over her work. She did not know that he lingered long at the counter in the vain hope of seeing her lift her eyes or of hearing her speak. Another girl less absolutely true of heart would have observed his frequent comings and goings and have drawn her own conclusions. But Olive was under a potent spell.

At last, when the days were sultry and still and London was emptying fast, Michael came to see her again. He came, as he had been wont to do, on a Sunday afternoon and found Olive in the parlor upstairs. At the sight of him the Wakes, husband and wife, discreetly vanished. And they said to each other in confidence that they had never seen him look so worn and strange. Olive, too, was struck with this "strangeness" and met him with an anxiety that shaded her joy.

"Dear, you have worked too hard," she said.

Yet as she looked at him again she saw that he had gained something by the loss of his fresh color; the pallor gave a new refinement to his face. His clothes, too, seemed to be worn in a new and easier fashion. He moved less stiffly and spoke more quietly.

"I believe I should have broken down entirely," he said, "if it had not been for the sea breezes. The Battersbys are at South sea, and I have been running down to see them."

"Then you are quite intimate with them now, Michael? Are they nice people? Is Mrs. Battersby a good, motherly woman? Are there any daughters? Oh, I am so glad they are going to be kind to us!" cried poor Olive in her simplicity.

An uneasy look flitted across Michael's face.

"My dear girl, you should not fly into raptures on small occasions," he remarked, coldly. "How is one to answer such a string of questions? First of all, there is no Mrs. Battersby. And, as Mr. Battersby is a feeble old man whose mind is failing, I cannot get very intimate with him."

"Oh," said Olive in a disappointed tone; "and there is no daughter?"

"Well, yes, there is a daughter." He admitted the fact with a curious reluctance. "But she is a good deal older than you are; and—and you would not find her a sympathetic person, I think."

"Then she is not nice, is she?" Olive asked.

"I really don't know what you mean by 'nice'; it is a woman's word."

Michael tried to smile naturally, and only produced a strange contortion of the lips.

"But if people are not sympathetic they can't be nice," persisted Olive unwisely. "You think her horrid, and don't like to say so."

He flushed angrily.

"I have never thought anything so preposterous," he said. "I only meant that Miss Battersby was calm and sensible, and not given to romantic dreaming."

The speech was spoken in a tone that pained Olive deeply. She strove to talk on as if nothing had hurt her, but she was not able to pretend a cheerfulness that she did not feel. Michael had not said a word about their future plans, he did not tell her that she must soon come to a new home. He talked in a vague way of changes at the works, and of old Mr. Battersby's uncertain life, and said that Edward Battersby hated trouble and business. And then he suddenly got up to go, and gave her a cold kiss at parting.

"When shall I see you again, Michael?" she asked.

"I don't know. I wish I could fix a day for coming," he answered; "but Edward is always wanting me, and I am so worried and hurried that there is scarcely time to think. However, I will write if I do not come."

When he had gone, Olive went away to her little room and sat down by the bed in utter bewilderment. The person that she loved, her promised husband, of whom she had thought hour after hour, what had become of him? It was not the old Michael who had just left her, but some one with a different manner and a cold heart. Success had come, that success which had been so longed for, and was this all that it had brought? The window was left open, but the hot London air that came in did not cool her burning temples. Oh, to be at Eastmoen now, and feel the breeze blowing fresh from the old hills.

Uncle Wake did not like the aspect of affairs, and saw that Olive was looking pale and sad. He sent her to church with his wife, and meditated over the state of things without deciding on what was best to be done. It seemed to him that Michael was disposed to draw back; but if it were so, Samuel was not a man to drag him forward. Better that this rare flower should wither on its stalk, than that an unwilling hand should be forced to gather it.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

EXCERPTS.

"No monkey business, there!"
"But officer, I'm an organ grinder."—Puck.

A CRAFTY DEER.

The Method By Which a Wary Old Stag Escaped Pursuit.

Deer have learned wonderful cunning from their hardships in the chase. Sometimes a wary stag, started up from his covert, will run into another leafy haunt where a young animal has taken refuge, and turn him out, lying down in his place, no doubt hoping with all his panting heart that the hunters will not know the difference. Hurried forth from that resting-place, he then doubles and turns, and perhaps takes to the water, not only as solace for his heated blood but to throw the hounds off the scent. One old stag, mentioned in "Forty-five years of Sport," had even more advanced ideas than these.

For many years past Lord Lovat had been trying to hunt down this stag, nicknamed "Square Toes," but as the animal had extraordinary cunning, it was fifteen years before he succeeded in getting a shot at it. At last, one day, when he and his stalker were in hot pursuit of "Square Toes" and his several hinds, the animals ascended a hill, and as they reached the skyline, the hinds alone seemed to cross it. Again the old strategist had mysteriously disappeared.

The stalker took down his glass and shut it with a slap, and Lord Lovat, equally disgusted, resigned himself to the usual situation. Among the men present, however, was a new hand, who declared bashfully, that one of the hinds, in going over the skyline, appeared to have three ears.

"My lord," cried the stalker, joyfully, on hearing the remark, "you stag is with the hinds; we'd better be going."

However, Lord Lovat had seen no reason for believing the stag to be there, and still hesitated.

"There's no time to be lost," insisted the man. "Come, my lord, let us be going!"

"But how on earth do you make that out?" asked his master.

"Well, my lord," replied the man, "if you will be starting, to save time, I will tell you as we go. When you get to the top of the hill we shall see Square Toes or I am mistaken, for do you not know you had said one hind seemed to have three ears? Well, it's just possible your third ear was a brow antler, and the cunning beast has all this time been 'doing us' by throwing his horns on his back, and getting in among the hinds, when going over the skyline."

Over the hill they rode, and found the clever stag placidly feeding. Sad to relate, his career as an inventor was then and there cut short, but his "method" has probably passed on, in tradition, to other members of the herd.—Youth's Companion.

The May Wide Awake

Opens with a delightfully fantastic and oriental rhyme descriptive of the birth of the gauze. It is by Theron Brown with a frontispiece illustration by Burgess, and is called "The Bamboo Life." The leading article of the number (splendidly illustrated) is Adeline Fordham's stirring description of "A Medieval Stronghold," the great French castle of Pierrefonds, which, dismantled by Richelieu, has been restored by the famous French architect, Viollet-le-Duc. Philip Hale's story, "A Grain of Sand," is one of the good things of the number. Miss Helen Gray Cone tells about "A Picture Book of 1789"—William Blake's home-made and hand-made "Songs of Innocence." Alexander Black has a unique sleeping-car story, "Upper Nine." M. B. Ryerson contributes a charming story of a little studio girl, "Phebe Stout—Sculptor." There is a bright story for Decoration Day, "Almost a Deserter," by Miriam Brawston, and a stirring ode for the same memorial occasion, addressed to American boys and girls—"Decoration Day," by Elbridge S. Brooks; Mrs. Emma Huntington Nason has a charming set of verses, "My Lady of Make-Believe"; Lieut.-Col. Thorndike gives in his series of "One Man's Adventures," an account of his "Getting Away from Gibraltar."

—A party of cultivated people (says the Congregationalist) stood before an ancient cathedral admiring its grandeur, which several centuries of existence had failed to dim. The noise of the cars in the immediate vicinity so annoyed one of the ladies of the party that she impulsively said, "I wonder why they built the cathedral so near the railroad?"

—Young Medical Man—Thank goodness, I have pulled through my exams at last. It is horrible to think of all the hard work I have had to go through these last four years. Elderly Practitioner—Well, my dear colleague, there is one consolation; you won't have anything to do for a long, long while now.—Der Floh.

—To Regulate the Length of the Sermon—Vestryman—"Have you talking clocks?" Jeweler—"I can have one made to order." Vestryman—"Well, we want one that will pronounce the benediction at noon and at 9 o'clock p. m."—Jeweler's Weekly.

—Polly—So you are really and truly engaged—how did it come about? Patsey—Well, papa said he didn't care, mama said she didn't care, Jack said he didn't care, and I'm sure I didn't care, so we became engaged.

—Bred to It.—Yotting Cappe—"Smithson is a good sailor. He must be used to brine." Mayne Top—"He ought to be. His father runs a pickle factory."—Kate Field's Washington.